

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the substitute specification, filed on December 27, 2002 in response to the Examiner's request therefor, as shown in clean form below. A Marked-Up Copy of the amended paragraph of the substitute specification is attached.

Page 18, lines 7-10, please amend the paragraph, as follows:

D1
A joint portion JP joined with the cover body 20 is formed around an opening portion 12 formed in the main body 10. This joint portion JP constitutes an overlapping portion 15 in which an outer peripheral edge 205 of the cover body 20 is arranged on an inner side of an opening edge 105 of the main body 10 and is overlapped with this opening edge 105.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claim 12 as shown in clean form below. A Marked-Up Copy of the amended claim is attached.

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12. (Twice Amended) The panel for an airbag according to claim 5, further comprising a rib projecting into the second wall portion and connected to an airbag case of the airbag through a connecting member.

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the present amendment of the drawings, specification, and claim 12, and the following discussion requesting reconsideration of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of the claims, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3, 5-17, 19, and 20 are pending in this application, claim 12 having been amended, by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, the drawing was objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a) as failing to show every feature of the invention specified in the claims, claim 12 was

rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite, claims 1, 3, 5, 12-17, and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by *Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 10-095029* (hereinafter "*JP '029*"), claims 6-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *JP '029*, and claim 20 was allowed.

Applicants are hereby submitting a complete set of corrected formal drawings having the proposed drawing corrections made in the Amendment filed on December 11, 2002 incorporated therein and also having reference character --JP-- representing the "joint portion" inserted into Figs. 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30, 34, 36, and 43 in response to the drawing objection given in the present Office Action. Accordingly, Applicants have also amended the substitute specification, filed on December 27, 2002 in response to the Examiner's request therefor, in order to insert reference character --JP-- after every occurrence of the term "joint portion." Applicants respectfully submit that the corrected formal drawings and the amendments to the specification do not add new matter. Based on the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to the drawing, and approval of the corrected formal drawings.

Claim 12 has been amended for clarity. More particularly, claim 12 has been amended to change the term "the airbag case" on line 2 to --an airbag case of the airbag--. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment to claim 12 does not add new matter. Based on the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 1, 3, 5, 12-17, and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by *JP '029* and the rejection of claims 6-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *JP '029* for the following reasons.

Applicants are hereby perfecting their claim of priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 by submitting certified translations of the seven (7) priority documents, namely, Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 09-214138 filed on July 23, 1997 in the Japanese Patent Office, Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 10-032079 filed on January 28, 1998 in the Japanese Patent Office, Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 10-032080 filed on January 28, 1998 in the Japanese Patent Office, Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 10-032081 filed on January 28, 1998 in the Japanese Patent Office, Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 10-033082 filed on January 28, 1998 in the Japanese Patent Office, Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 10-033942 filed on January 29, 1998 in the Japanese Patent Office, and Japanese Patent Application No. 10-054342 filed on February 18, 1998 in the Japanese Patent Office.

[Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 1, 3, 5, 12-17, and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by *JP '029* and the rejection of claims 6-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *JP '029* have both now been overcome pursuant to the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (hereinafter "MPEP") § 201.15 entitled Right of Priority, Overcoming a Reference since Applicants claim to foreign priority has now been perfected and thus, they are now entitled to their earliest priority date of July 23, 1997 thus antedating *JP '029* which only has a publication date of April 14, 1998.]

Applicants also respectfully submit that claims 3, 5-12, and 19 are either directly or indirectly dependent upon independent claim 1 so that arguments serving to patentably distinguish independent claim 1 from the prior art of record are available, among others, to patentably distinguish claims 3, 5-12, and 19. Applicants also respectfully submit that claim 15 is directly dependent upon independent claim 14 so that arguments serving to patentably distinguish independent claim 14 from the prior art of record are available, among others, to

patentably distinguish claim 15. Applicants also respectfully submit that claim 17 is directly dependent upon independent claim 16 so that arguments serving to patentably distinguish independent claim 16 from the prior art of record are available, among others, to patentably distinguish claim 17. Based on the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 3, 5, 12-17, and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by *JP '029*, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 6-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *JP '029*, and allowance of claims 1, 3, 5-17, and 19 in addition to already allowed claim 20.

In view of the present amendment, claims 1, 3, 5-17, and 19 are believed to be in condition for allowance in addition to already allowed claim 20, and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

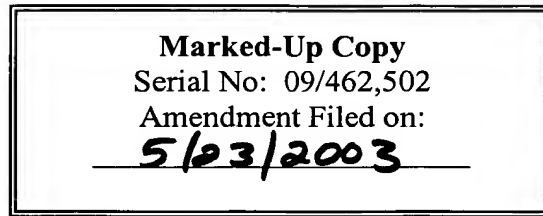
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